

Fragments

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Summary: She seems so invincible, but just touch her and she'll wince. She has secrets and trusts no one. She's the perfect example of betrayal, because anyone she's ever trusted broke her.

Fragments

\*\*This story will contain possible spoilers for Menace, Unnatural Selection, New Order, Gemini, Reckoning and Threads. It is set during Season 8, after 'Gemini', but will include references and missing scenes from the episodes mentioned above. \*\*

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><p><strong>Prologue<strong>

\*\*14 December, 2004.\*\*

I hope you don't make me regret your decision.\_

The words had haunted him the moment they'd left Samantha Carter's lips almost two years ago. He knew what he'd asked her to do at the time, and he knew what it had cost her as a result of following his order; but that was exactly what it was -- an order. He didn't particularly like having to make the call, but he'd had no choice; it was part of the job, and sometimes, it came at a cost. Today, Jack realized that the time to start paying the price had finally arrived, but as he looked around and saw various broken plates and glasses strewn across the kitchen, he wasn't sure if he was prepared for the ultimatum.

The sound of glass smashing, followed by a frustrated yell, caught his attention and he moved quietly through the darkened hall. He saw a sliver of light under the bathroom door but when he heard no further noises from the other side of the door, he reached out and

found it unlocked.

Everything was as it should have been, except for Sam Carter who was sitting on the bathroom floor with her back against the wall and her knees pulled tight to her chest, her head resting on her knees. A quick glance to Jack's right revealed that the mirror door on the wall cabinet was no longer intact, but in hundreds of pieces on the floor and on any available surface in the small room.

He grimaced, as some of the shards broke further under his boot as he stepped forward, but he didn't have time to worry as the noise startled Sam and she scrambled to her feet.

"What are you doing here, Sir?"

"Take it easy, Carter," he reassured, holding his hands out by his sides. "When you didn't answer the door, I let myself in."

He moved another step closer and extended a hand to the Colonel, but frowned as Sam tried to move away.

"Don't touch me, please."

"Carter â€“"

"I just want to be left alone, Sir."

He observed her silently for a moment. "Talk to me, Sam."

She lifted her tear-filled eyes to his, but Jack was surprised as he watched her initial upset turn to anger.

"Talk to you?" She repeated incredulously. "Do you have any idea â€“"

She stopped abruptly and shook her head. "I think you should leave, Sir."

"With all due respect, Carter, you've destroyed half of your house â€“"

"And with all due respect, Sir, I don't want to hear it."

"Yeah, well, you're gonna have to," he shot back, folding his arms across his chest.

"Is that an order?"

"If it has to be."

She let out an exasperated sigh. "What do you want to hear, Sir? That I screwed up? I know that, and if it's the last thing I do, I swear I will fix it, but â€“"

"It's not your fault, Sam."

"Yes, it is," she hissed. "It's all my fault because I let my judgment get in the way."

The couple fell silent at her outburst. After a moment, she took a

deep breath. "A couple of years ago, I said that I didn't want to regret a decision that you made," she said quietly.

Jack nodded and as they held each other's gaze, Sam whispered, "Do you still think it was worth the risk?

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file.